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International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

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Meeting of the States Parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

Twenty-seventh Meeting

Summary record of the 33rd meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 4 September 2008, at 10 a.m.

Temporary Chairperson: Mr. Mbaidjol ..... (Representative of the Secretary-General)
Chairperson: Mr. Cancela ..... (Uruguay)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

Opening of the Meeting by the representative of the Secretary-General

1. **The Temporary Chairperson** said that since the twenty-sixth Meeting of the States Parties, Andorra, Bahrain, Maldives, Montenegro and Samoa had become parties to the Covenant; Albania, Andorra, Maldives, Moldova and Turkey had become parties to the Optional Protocol; and Albania, Andorra, France, Honduras, Mexico, Moldova, the Philippines and Ukraine had become parties to the Second Optional Protocol. Finally, following Papua New Guinea's accession on 21 July 2008, the Covenant would enter into force in that country on 21 October 2008, bringing the total number of States parties to the Covenant to 162, of which 111 were also parties to the Optional Protocol and 67 to the Second Optional Protocol.

2. The consideration of initial and periodic reports submitted by States parties under article 40 of the Covenant was an essential tool in fostering an informed and productive dialogue between members of the Human Rights Committee and State party delegations. Since 2006, the Committee had considered 23 reports submitted by States parties and had adopted concluding observations on those reports. It had also reviewed the implementation of the Covenant in two States parties in the absence of a report, following the procedure adopted in 2001 to deal with States parties that failed to comply with their reporting obligations under article 40 of the Covenant. The Committee's procedure for following up on concluding observations, initiated in 2001, had been further developed and the majority of States parties had provided the Committee with timely follow-up information.

3. Since the entry into force of the Optional Protocol to the Covenant, a total of 1,799 communications had been registered; since September 2006, the Committee had adopted Views on 88 communications under the Optional Protocol procedure, and had declared 15 communications admissible and 55 inadmissible. The consideration of 33 communications had been discontinued. Through its Special Rapporteur for follow-up on Views, the Committee had continued to seek to ensure implementation of its Views by arranging meetings with representatives of States parties that either had not responded or had given unsatisfactory replies to the Committee's request for information about the measures taken to give effect to its Views.

4. The Committee's workload under article 40 of the Covenant and the Optional Protocol had continued to grow, with 22 initial or periodic reports and 409 communications currently awaiting consideration. The Committee was considering special measures to remedy the situation, such as lengthening one of its sessions.

5. The Committee had adopted a revised general comment (No. 32) on article 14 of the Covenant at its ninetieth session, held in July 2007, and was currently working on a revised general comment (No. 33) on States parties' obligations under the Optional Protocol.

6. The Committee had continued to contribute to the discussion prompted by the Secretary-General's call for the streamlining and reform of the treaty reporting system and viewed favourably ongoing efforts to harmonize the treaty bodies' working methods. Its Chairperson and representatives had participated in all consultative processes in that regard, in particular the sixth and seventh inter-committee meetings held, respectively, in June 2007 and June 2008. The Committee had also decided to revise its reporting guidelines in order to ensure their compatibility with the guidelines on a common core document, as contained in the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties (HRI/MC/2006/3 and Corr.1).

7. In October 2008, the Committee was scheduled to discuss its relationship with the Human Rights Council and the development of procedures and guidelines for enhanced cooperation with special procedures mandate holders, in particular with a view to developing effective approaches to the universal periodic review mechanism.

Election of the Chairperson

8. **Mr. Ciorobea** (Romania) nominated Mr. Cancela (Uruguay) for the office of Chairperson.

9. *Mr. Cancela (Uruguay) was elected Chairperson by acclamation.*

10. *Mr. Cancela (Uruguay) took the Chair.*

Adoption of the agenda (CCPR/SP/70)

11. *The agenda was adopted.*

12. **The Chairperson** drew attention to rules 2 and 3 of the rules of procedure (CCPR/SP/2/Rev.1). Rule 2 provided that the credentials of representatives and the names of delegation members should be submitted to the Secretary-General not later than one week before a Meeting, and that such credentials should be issued by the Head of State or Government or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The content of that rule had been communicated to States parties by the Secretary-General in his note of 4 August 2008, but a number of States parties had not yet submitted credentials. He urged the representatives in question to ensure that their credentials were submitted to the Secretary-General as soon as possible and suggested that, in accordance with rule 3, the States parties in question should be entitled provisionally to participate in the Meeting.

13. *It was so decided.*

Election of other officers

14. **The Chairperson** said that Mr. Hreggvidsson (Iceland), Ms. Kopicová (Czech Republic) and Mr. Nsengimana (Rwanda) had been nominated for the office of Vice-Chairperson.

15. *Mr. Hreggvidsson (Iceland), Ms. Kopicová (Czech Republic) and Mr. Nsengimana (Rwanda) were elected Vice-Chairpersons by acclamation.*

Election, in accordance with articles 28 to 32 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, of nine members of the Human Rights Committee to replace those whose terms are due to expire on 31 December 2008 (CCPR/SP/71 and Add.1, 2, 3, 4 and 5)

16. **The Chairperson** drew attention to the particulars of candidates nominated by States parties to fill the nine vacancies on the Human Rights Committee (CCPR/SP/71 and Add.1, 3 and 4) and informed the States parties of the withdrawal of two nominations (CCPR/SP/71/Add.2 and 5). Accordingly, there were 15 candidates for the nine vacancies. He also drew attention to the voting procedure and other relevant provisions of articles 30 and 31 of the Covenant.

17. He invited representatives to elect by secret ballot nine members of the Human Rights Committee.

18. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, Mr. Pugliese (Italy), Mr. Dodo (Nigeria), Mr. Chernenko (Russian Federation) and Mr. Çobanoğlu (Turkey) acted as tellers.*

19. **Mr. Daou** (Mali), speaking on a point of order, said that the document bearing the symbol CCPR/SP/71 contained an incomplete list of candidates. The list should have been updated, as it would have put all candidates on an equal footing.

20. **The Chairperson** thanked the representative of Mali for his comment and said it would be taken into account in the future.

21. *A vote was taken by secret ballot.*

Number of ballot papers:	157
Number of valid ballots:	157
Number of representatives voting:	157
Required majority:	79
Number of votes obtained:	
Mr. O'Flaherty (Ireland)	136
Mr. Lallah (Mauritius)	117
Mr. Ayat (Morocco)	115
Mr. Thelin (Sweden)	115
Mr. Salvioli (Argentina)	114
Mr. Fathalla (Egypt)	111
Sir Nigel Rodley (United Kingdom)	94
Mr. Rivas Posada (Colombia)	93
Mr. Bouzid (Algeria)	86
Mr. Bousso (Senegal)	80
Mr. Glélé-Ahanhanzo (Benin)	79
Mr. Johnson López (Ecuador)	77
Mr. Fayad (Lebanon)	60
Mr. Konaté (Mali)	35
Mr. Nouhou Hamani (Niger)	35

22. *Having obtained the required majority and the largest number of votes, Mr. Ayat (Morocco), Mr. Bouzid (Algeria), Mr. Fathalla (Egypt), Mr. Lallah (Mauritius), Mr. O'Flaherty (Ireland), Mr. Rivas Posada (Colombia), Sir Nigel Rodley (United Kingdom), Mr. Salvioli (Argentina) and Mr. Thelin (Sweden) were elected members of the Human Rights Committee.*

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.